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NSC BRIEFING

24 August 1960

MALI FEDERATION

- I. Senegal's secession on 20 August from Mali Federation--only two months independent--raises possibility of new disorders in West Africa as well as serious new problems for France and UN.
- II. Senegal's withdrawal followed period of rising tension with Soudanese leaders over allocation of top administrative posts and control of foreign policy, and has aroused tough reaction in Soudan.
 - A. Secessionists led by Premier Dia and Leopold Senghor are firmly established in Dakar, setting up own government, and asking for foreign recognition.
 - B. Most Senegalese leaders in agreement, but opposition extremist groups in southern Senegal may cause trouble.
 - C. Soudanese officials and Radio Soudan severely condemn Senegalese action, and may order Soudanese residents in Senegal to provoke trouble.
- III. International aspects could assume considerable importance.
 - A. Mali disintegration a blow to French Community.
 1. Paris officially neutral, and De Gaulle has offered his good offices to resolve crisis or establish new relationship.
 2. Although Mali Premier Keita has stated he will "probably" go to Paris (where Dia ^{VISITED} ~~SAW~~ earlier this week), he may well renege, and meanwhile has been attacking the French attitude as equivalent to backing for Senegal.
 - B. Both Senegal and Mali government of Keita trying to involve UN.
 1. Senegal has asked for admission as separate nation.

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2. Keita has asked US to transmit request to UN Secretary General for immediate meeting of Security Council--claims a threat to world peace--and for dispatch of UN troops.

a. Keita has virtually no troops to force Senegalese compliance. Most of Mali's 2,000 gendarmes and 5,000-man army composed of Senegalese; nearly 600 of Mali's best troops are with UN in Congo; 7,000 French Community troops in Dakar (with considerable French element) observing strict neutrality

C. USSR and Eastern Europeans, already attacking Paris for backing "Senegalese puppet," claim situation resembles Belgian action in backing Katanga in Congo crisis.

D. Most African states probably opposed to Senegalese plea for recognition.

IV. Break-up of Mali Federation might throw poverty-ridden Soudan into arms of Guinea.

A. Land-locked Soudan has few economic resources.

B. In the past there has been considerable political rapport between Soudanese nationalist extremists and Guinea's Sekou Touré.

C. Soudanese minister of interior reportedly visited Conakry in early August to commit Mali Federation to union with Ghana-Guinea and may have also arranged for Soudanese-Guinea union if Senegal seceded.

1. Most Senegalese leaders are pro-French in orientation, and the question of alignment with Guinea--raised by the Soudanese minister's visit to Conakry--may well have been a large factor in secession.

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